

**ABSTRACT**

1           An unwanted message may be identified by inspecting the payload portion of a  
message being communicated, comparing the characteristics of the payload portion with  
stored data indicating characteristics of other messages, and identifying a security condition  
5   based on a comparison of the message inspected. The characteristics inspected may include  
the payload portion of a message or the whole message when the characteristics are being  
compared against messages being exchanged on more than one local exchanging system.  
Furthermore, the characteristics of messages may be tracked for comparison against the  
characteristics of future messages. A threshold number of those characteristics may  
10   subsequently implicate a hostile security condition, even if a current comparison of these  
characteristics does not reach the threshold necessary to implicate a hostile security  
condition.

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